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ABSTRACT

Intended for coordinators of volunteer recruitment, the booklet examines practical issues in developing and implementing programs in which industry employees serve as volunteers in special education. Introductory material briefly addresses volunteerism in America, and considers the need for industry-education cooperation as well as advantages to employers and employees. Seven planning steps are identified: (1) develop cooperation and support within the organization; (2) establish program goals and objectives; (3) inventory local special education programs and services; (4) establish links with local special education programs; (5) plan for program implementation; (6) establish and maintain effective organizational communication; and (7) establish a program monitoring and record keeping system. Implementation guidelines are offered for management orientation, community/public relations, recruitment of employee volunteers, applicant screening, orientation and training, volunteer roles, referral for placement, followup and evaluation, performance monitoring recognition and appreciation, and program evaluation. (CL)

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VOLUNTEERISM IN SPECIAL EDUCATION THROUGH INDUSTRY-EDUCATION COOPERATION

A Program Development Handbook for Coordinators of Volunteer Recruitment

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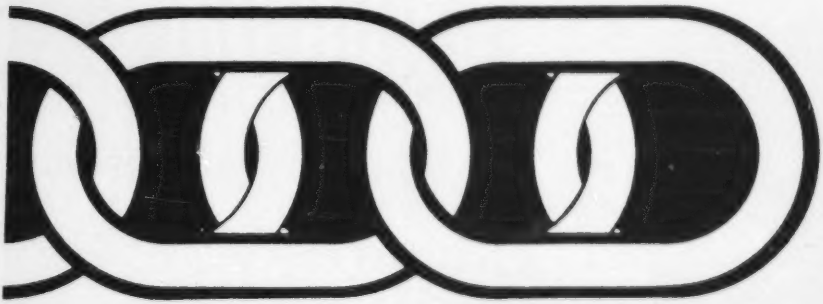

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Volunteerism in Special Education Through Industry-Education Cooperation

A Program Development Handbook for Coordinators of Volunteer Recruitment

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National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (NAIEC)
Buffalo, New York

1984

The contents of this handbook were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and one should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction 1
- Volunteerism in America 1
- Need for Industry-Education Cooperation 1
- Opportunities for Volunteerism in Special Education Programs and Services 2
- Purpose of the Handbook 4

II. Planning and Organizing for Industry-Special Education Cooperation 5
- Develop Cooperation and Support Within Your Organization 5
- Establish Program Goals and Objectives 6
- Inventory Local Special Education Programs and Services 7
- Establish Linkages with Local Special Education Programs 9
- Plan for Program Implementation 10
- Establish and Maintain Effective Organizational Communication 11
- Establish a Program Monitoring and Record Keeping System 11

III. Implementing Industry Volunteer Special Education Program 12
- Management Orientation 12
- Community/Public Relations 13
- Recruitment of Employee Volunteers 13
- Screening of Applicants 18
- Orientation and Training 22
  - Volunteer Roles 24
    - Administrative Assistance 24
    - Staff Development 25
    - Classroom Activities 25
    - Special Services 27
- Referral for Placement 27
- Follow-Up and Evaluation 28
  - Follow-Up and Monitoring of Volunteer Performance 28
  - Recognition and Appreciation 30
  - Program Evaluation 32

BIBLIOGRAPHY

RESOURCES

I. INTRODUCTION

Volunteerism in America

Volunteering, an integral part of American society throughout its history, involves over one-half of adult citizens in the United States. According to recent polls it is as strong as ever. Gallup surveys taken in 1981 and 1983 showed the number of Americans serving as volunteers has increased from 52% to 53%. Women volunteer more than men, but this gap is closing. While the percentage of women volunteers has remained constant at about 56%, the number of male volunteers has increased from 47% to 53%.

From a regional perspective, westerners lead the nation in terms of volunteer participation (62%) compared with 55% in the east, 54% in the south and 51% in the midwest.

The impact of volunteerism is impressive. Estimates place the annual value of volunteer activities in excess of thirty billion dollars.

Need for Industry-Education Cooperation

Industry volunteer involvement in education is promoted for varied reasons. A major purpose for industry (i.e. business, labor, government and professions) involvement in education is the need for improving the competence of the labor force. Although education is recognized as essential to economic growth, several major problems are apparent. Over half the students who start college never finish. Nearly one million students drop out of high schools each year. Approximately the same number graduate from high school but lack the necessary skills required for employment or have skills with limited marketability. This is an economic issue that the private sector cannot ignore. Students must be better prepared to meet the rapidly changing demands of work so they can participate productively in a competitive, technological society. This can be facilitated through a broader, more effective partnership between our schools, business, labor and government.

A national network of local Industry-Education Councils, supported by state industry-education directors/coordinators, has been developed primarily through the efforts of the National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (NAIEC). The purposes of NAIEC are:

1. To provide a national organization for representatives of business, industry, education (public and postsecondary), government and labor to foster school improvement and economic development.

2. To assist states and communities to establish an industry-education joint structure and process designed to refocus/redirect academic and vocational education so that it is more responsive to student and employer needs.
3. To serve as the National Clearinghouse for Information on Industry Involvement in Education.

Accordingly, the NAIEC has identified the tremendous opportunity that exists by channeling volunteerism in industry-education cooperation to address one of education's pressing need areas, that of special education for handicapped children and youth.

Opportunities for Volunteerism Through Industry-Education Cooperation in Special Education Programs and Services

Special education programs and services have increased dramatically during the past decade. Spurred by litigation and legislation at the state and federal levels, educational opportunities were created for handicapped children who were either denied public education entirely, or not provided with programs and services necessary to help them benefit from education. Landmark legislation at the federal level, Public Law 94-142, *The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975*, established a national policy to provide all handicapped children a free, appropriate public education.

School districts are now involved in implementing and upgrading programs and services for this special population. Much of the current emphasis is on upgrading program quality, identifying gaps in services and examining ways to develop these services. Volunteers provide a valuable resource to the schools in this regard by offering creative responses to help special educators meet these challenges.

Educational volunteers have enhanced school efforts in many ways. While direct service in the classrooms is the most common way, many volunteer assignments are performed outside the classroom to augment services. Volunteers can enrich the curriculum, provide administrative and clerical assistance, and assist in providing community and social services. This utilization: (1) enriches student experiences and heightens their motivation; (2) frees special educators from non-teaching tasks; (3) assists in providing individualized instruction; (4) helps in administering, supervising and instructing; and (5) describes the processes and problems of special education to other citizens, thus fostering continued community support and involvement. Obviously, volunteers can maintain and improve special education programs during this period of fiscal austerity and increased program accountability.

Industry has a large pool of volunteer talent that could be used to assist in the education of handicapped children and youth. Cooperative linkages between industry and education encourage and facilitate the efforts of organizations and individuals. Several illustrative examples directed to special education and related programs are described below:

- Many major firms have "Social Service Leave" or "Executive On-Loan" programs that allow interested staff to receive salaries while working with a program or organization.
- IBM's "Project on Computer Programmer Training for the Severely Disabled" provides salaries and travel expenses for four IBM employees who serve as full-time program developers and consultants to rehabilitation agencies and schools.
- The Telephone Pioneers of America, a social-industrial organization, provides extensive services. For example, members with expertise in electronics developed devices to help disabled children, such as a beeping audio softball for the visually impaired and an instrument to teach deaf children how to modulate their speech by colorgraphic feedback.
- The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers have implemented a national demonstration program to promote the hiring of handicapped applicants and the retention of disabled workers in union jobs.
- The American Association for the Advancement of Science has established task forces to reduce barriers which limit the participation of handicapped persons in their programs and professions.
- The National Restaurant Association has staff persons who serve as itinerant network coordinators and provide technical assistance using NRA's network of state associations and local chapters.
- The Industry Education Council of California's Cross-Agency Project for the Education, Training, and Placement of Handicapped Youth has developed an "action partnership" among many community agencies to improve the quality of life and opportunities for handicapped youth.

These examples illustrate how partnerships and cooperation between industry and education can use volunteers to strengthen special education.

There are practical reasons for encouraging company-school cooperation in special education. As a key person in your company's activities with local schools, you may find people who need to be reminded of them. These are advantages:

To Employers:

- Corporate and other taxes can be used effectively to support better special education programs.
- Business products, services and policies are accepted more readily and understood better.
- Job training needs decline as the supply of well-educated, properly trained persons increases.
- The company image is enhanced through demonstrated social responsibility and improved public relations.
- Equal employment opportunities increase.
- Employer morale improves when they receive company support, encouragement and recognition.
- Current employees' volunteer efforts become better organized and more visible.
- School programs are better able to respond to business and community needs.
- Educators become aware of the business point of view.
- Students and school personnel are better informed consumers.
- Students understand how basic skills are used in industry.

To Employees who:

- Will be able to use special knowledge and skills.
- Will have an improved sense of security that results from feeling one's life has purpose and meaning.
- Will feel a part of activities that have company and community significance.
- Desire to help others.
- Have a desire for recognition and status.
- Need to feel useful and needed.
- Will learn new skills through participation in enjoyable and rewarding activities.
- Can gain visibility and skills that will help advancement in work and social arenas.
- Use leisure time productively and reduce loneliness, isolation and pressure.

Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook is a practical guide to industry personnel who are involved in recruiting, orienting and training industry employees to serve as volunteers in special education. It presents suggestions and considerations for planning and organization, and implementation and evaluation.

II. PLANNING AND ORGANIZING FOR INDUSTRY-SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATION

Planning is essential for the successful implementation of an industry volunteer program. Effective planning creates a climate that supports program implementation by determining the scope of the program, developing program goals and objectives, identifying and securing resources necessary for program implementation, and determining procedures used in operating the program. During the planning process, potential problems regarding program implementation can be identified and resolved. Each problem resolution will contribute to the subsequent success of the volunteer program.

Develop Cooperation and Support Within Your Organization

An industry volunteer recruitment, orientation and training program cannot succeed without cooperation and support from top management who are ultimately responsible for the operation of the business. Depending upon the organizational level, those managers might include chief executive officers, vice-presidents, area managers, division or departmental directors, and plant managers. Without this support there is little chance of involving employees as the potential volunteers. The more senior level staff are involved, the greater the chance for success.

Cooperation and support of middle management level and front-line supervisors will also be important during the planning of the program. These individuals should understand the purpose, benefits, and scope of the program. Concerns about possible interference with work assignments or confusion about the role they should play should be addressed. Support for an industry volunteer program can be enhanced by involving these individuals throughout the planning process, by convincing them that the program will not be disruptive to their operating areas, and by emphasizing the potential benefits to employees who participate as volunteers.

Establish Program Goals and Objectives

Program goals should be consistent with the levels of commitment of the company to the volunteer program and the resources allocated to it. They should reflect the needs of special education programs, and the total number of employees eligible to participate. Goals provide direction for the volunteer program. Once these are determined, objectives serve to quantify the outcomes that should be achieved in order to attain each goal. After the volunteer program has been started, the objectives serve as benchmarks against which progress can be measured and the effectiveness of the program can be judged.

Goals and objectives can be developed by individuals or a committee selected from among the officers, managers, supervisors and employees. Input can be obtained by having others in the company review draft goals and objectives. Reactions to draft statements can be summarized, compared, and discussed and appropriate modifications made to the goals and objectives. Written, publicized goals and objectives are important and provide corporate endorsement and support.

In finalizing goals and objectives, the following characteristics should be taken into account:

- Goals and objectives for the volunteer program should be consistent and compatible with the philosophy of the company.
- Goals and objectives should be appropriate and realistic.
- Goals should designate what is to be accomplished.
- Objectives should designate specific targets, time frames and results that can be measured.

Some *example* goal and objective statements illustrate these principles:

Goal: To develop an employee volunteer recruitment, orientation and training program for volunteers in special education.

Objectives:

1. To design, develop and distribute program promotional materials to each employee by (a specific date).
2. To plan and conduct three orientation and training sessions for employees by the end of the first program year.
3. To orient and train at least 10% of company employees to serve as volunteers in special education by the end of the first program year.

Inventory Local Special Education Programs and Services

There are several types of programs and services within local areas that should be identified and catalogued:

- Public school district programs and services, including cooperative educational services.
- Private, non-profit programs and services.
- State-operated programs and services.
- Local public (non-school) agencies such as mental health.
- Community colleges, technical institutes.

Almost every public school district has a person designated as director or coordinator of special education programs. In small school districts, this may be an assistant superintendent for instruction or another school administrator at the central office level. This person should be contacted initially to get comprehensive information about special education programs in your area. One school district serving 50,000+ students had the following programs and services:

Audiology
Child Find—Special Education
Developmental Disabilities
Emotionally Handicapped
Hearing Impaired
Homebound Teachers
Learning Disabled
Mentally Handicapped
Occupational Therapy
Psychological Services
Physical Therapist
Physically Handicapped
Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Speech Clinicians
Speech Impaired
Visually Impaired
Special Schools

It may be that your area is served by more than one school district. In this case, directors in each district may need to be contacted. In some areas local school districts may cooperatively operate programs which would not be feasible for them to operate entirely by themselves. A regional vocational program, a multi-district program for hearing impaired students, and a cooperative service for visually impaired students are examples of such efforts.

Many communities have special programs operated by private, non-profit organizations. These programs may be sponsored by church groups, foundations, advocacy organizations such as the Association for Retarded Citizens, the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, and United Cerebral Palsy. Generally, these programs meet needs not addressed by public school programs. Lists of these types of programs can generally be obtained through the school system's director of special education or the local United Way.

State-operated programs and services may include residential centers for the mentally retarded, psychiatric hospitals for seriously emotionally disturbed, schools for the deaf and blind, special residential facilities, and diagnostic evaluation centers. Again, the local director of special education should know about state-operated facilities and services in the area.

Other local public agencies, such as mental health, social services, juvenile justice, may have programs for handicappped children. These are usually county operated programs which are non-school oriented. These programs can be identified by directly contacting each of these types of agencies in your area. County government listings in local phone directories typically include listings for area mental health, juvenile home, juvenile court, social services, and other agencies potentially serving the handicapped.

Many community colleges, technical institutes and similar post-secondary institutions now have special programs and services for handicapped learners. Contact these as well, because they can use volunteers to bolster the growing number of resource and support services for special students.

An inventory of programs and services among the different types of providers listed above will be extremely important to your volunteer program. The inventory needs to be thorough and comprehensive to identify all possible locations for volunteer service. Volunteers will likely want to know about programs where they live or work to ease transportation. Further, they will want to know the type of school or program, type of students served, and their age/grade levels. A systematic inventory, updated annually, will provide such information. In compiling the inventory, information can be catalogued as indicated below:

Program Name and Address	**Contact Person and Phone No.**	**Students Served**	**General Comments**
Example: Secondary Hearing Impaired Program Monroe High School	Andy Haynes 683-4949	Hearing impaired, grades 9-12	Many students are mainstreamed in regular classes.

Establish Links with Local Special Education Programs

After compiling the inventory of special education programs and services in your area, the next step is to establish linkages with them. Obviously, some of this will be done as you complete the inventory itself. A letter with follow-up phone contact can be used to establish relationships with the programs and services in your area. A sample letter follows.

SAMPLE LETTER
PURPOSE: ESTABLISH LINKAGES WITH PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

(Company Letterhead)

(Date)

(Contact Person, if known
Program Name
and Address)

Re: Volunteerism in Special Education Through Industry-Education Cooperation

Dear_____:

We are pleased to announce that we are sponsoring a volunteer effort which will benefit special education programs and services in the area. In the past, employees of our company have volunteered their time, energy and expertise to many worthwhile community endeavors. These volunteer efforts have been satisfying to our employees and beneficial to the community.

This new volunteer program has been designed to increase industry-education cooperation. Here's how it works. On a regular basis throughout the year, we recruit, orient and train volunteers from among our employees to serve as volunteers in special education. Our Coordinator of Volunteer Recruitment, (person's name), has received special training on the purpose and procedures for conducting these orientation sessions. Once these persons have completed the session, we feel they are ready and willing to serve as volunteers in a special education program like yours. We will refer them to the director of special education, or perhaps directly to a program.

We need to know if you would like to participate in this program and use our volunteers. If you do, please tell us the types of volunteer support that would help your program. This will assist us in recruitment, orientation and training. We look forward to hearing from you.

Very truly yours,

(Signature)
(Name)
Chief Executive Officer or
Officer in Charge

(Signature)
(Name)
Coordinator of Volunteer
Recruitment

Phone #

Because programs and services will change over time (e.g., change in population served, age levels, program location, contact person), maintain informal contacts and encourage them to keep you up to date on developments. Have your name and the name of your organization placed on school district and program mailing lists to receive routine newsletters and progress reports. Return the favor by sending them company newsletters and reports on the volunteer program. Communication is the key to establishing and maintaining these important linkages.

Plan for Program Implementation

Implicit in several of the preceding sections are items which must be considered prior to implementing the volunteer program, e.g., building internal organizational support for the program, setting goals and objectives, inventorying special education programs and establishing linkages with them. While each of these requires planning, they are essentially ongoing responsibilities to which the program must attend throughout program implementation.

As the preceding planning activities progress, the specifics of the intended program operations should be documented in a written plan. The plan should describe the proposed program and be reviewed by the senior management whose support is needed. As the plan takes shape, needed program resources can be estimated in light of the perceived scope of the program.

Resources to support the program may include postage, office supplies, secretarial and clerical assistance, local travel reimbursement, use of meeting rooms for orientation and training sessions, printing (promotional and recruitment materials, programs inventory, volunteer directory, forms, etc.), volunteer recognition programs, orientation and training sessions, publications coffee and other refreshments at meetings.

A written plan is the key factor in implementing an industry volunteer effort in special education. The time, patience, discipline and commitment in developing the plan should get results.

Establish and Maintain Effective Organizational Communication

Ideally, the coordinator will report to the position that provides the highest and most logical level of corporate support to the volunteer program. Commitment from the top and company support up and down the line are key factors that affect program success.

Effective communication should be established and maintained with the chief executive officer or the corporate officer in charge of the effort. While their direct involvement in the program may necessarily be limited, it is important to keep them informed of the program and its progress. By doing this, these corporate officers can stay in touch with the program, participate in volunteer activities, recognize participating employees, recruit additional middle and upper level professional and managerial personnel, and reaffirm the company's commitment at regular intervals.

Establish a Program Monitoring and Record Keeping System

The coordination of the volunteer program includes collection of information for monitoring program activities. The program coordinator, as well as other management personnel, need to determine specific information to maintain on program operations.

The volunteer program coordinator should maintain a current record of employees participating in the volunteer program for several reasons. First, the volunteer program office should be able to contact directly all current volunteer employees to inform them of any changes in program operations and to inform them of upcoming events which may be of interest to them. Second, a thorough record of employees who participate in the volunteer program can be helpful in assessing the extent to which employee volunteers have performed their intended roles.

A centralized filing system may be established to organize the information contained in volunteer application forms, interview summaries, and the referral for placement letters. The filing system should differentiate between those employees who are waiting for a volunteer assignment and those who are currently working as volunteers.

As the record keeping system increases in size and complexity the program coordinator may consider developing a cross-referenced central index to enable rapid access to the appropriate files. A word processor or microcomputer could easily be applied to maintain program records and match employee volunteers to specific requests.

III. IMPLEMENTING INDUSTRY VOLUNTEER SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Management Orientation

During the planning for the volunteer program, interaction with management personnel also served to gain input from them concerning what they believed to be potential benefits of the program, anticipated levels of participation, and suggested procedures for implementation. Once underway, additional orientation should be provided to stimulate further interest in and support for the program. These orientation activities should be designed to acquaint all company officers, managers and supervisors with the goal and structure of the volunteer program. They should gain an understanding of the various activities of the program and the potential roles that employee volunteers can fill. Further, they should be urged to inform their subordinates of the volunteer program and encourage their participation. As always, setting a good example by volunteering themselves is the best way to accomplish this.

An announcement of the plan to implement a volunteer program can serve as the initial step in orienting management personnel to the new program. The announcement should include a statement from top corporate management indicating support for the program. The announcement should provide information on the purpose and goals of the program, the potential volunteer roles, the name and location of the coordinator of the volunteer program, procedures for making application, and any scheduled dates for employee orientation and training sessions.

Orientation meetings may be held, but more likely this will be accomplished in presentations at regularly scheduled meetings of company management personnel. Other methods of providing orientation include special workshops, company newsletter articles, or company memoranda.

Considerable thought and effort should be given to preparing for the management orientation sessions. In addition to the oral presentation, handouts should be provided that describe the organization of the volunteer program, guidelines for recruiting volunteers, and sample volunteer role descriptions. Topics for inclusion in the presentation might include:

- roles of volunteers in special education programs;
- benefits which can be realized for the company and employees, and employees' families;
- goals and objectives of the volunteer program;
- services provided by the volunteer program coordinator;
- volunteer recruitment, screening, orientation and training, and referral for placement procedures;

- growth opportunities for employee volunteers;
- problem resolution procedures;
- evaluation of the volunteer program.

Orientation should be ongoing, especially to deal with changes in managerial personnel and changes in the scope and nature of the program as well. Periodic updating will be important to ensure continuous support and smooth program operation.

Community/Public Relations

Enhanced public image is a key benefit of the volunteer program. Employee morale improves as their involvement becomes better organized and more visible in the community.

Community and school support for the program should be cultivated during the planning of the program and nurtured through the duration of the program activities. Community and school representatives who were involved in planning the program should be recognized for their contributions to the planning effort and kept informed of the progress being made.

Other community leaders and influential groups should be made aware of the volunteer program. Approaches such as newspaper articles, radio talk shows, local television public interest programs and news coverage, billboards, presentations to business and civic groups, and numerous other means can be used to make the community aware of the existence of the program.

Recruitment of Employee Volunteers

Recruitment is the way contact is made with individual employees who are potentially willing to volunteer services to special education programs in your area. Recruitment informs them of the purposes of the volunteer program and they are also made aware of the types of volunteer skills or services needed.

In seeking the assistance of employees as volunteers, it is important to consider the various factors which motivate people to these responsibilities. Some frequently stated reasons for volunteering are the following:

- desire to utilize special knowledge and skills;
- need for feeling that one's life has purpose, meaning and significance;
- need to be a part of activities that have company, community and national importance;

- desire to help others;
- desire for recognition and status;
- interest in feeling useful and needed;
- interest in learning new skills and about new areas;
- interest in participating in activities that are perceived as enjoyable and rewarding;
- desire to gain visibility and skills that may help advancement in work and social areas;
- need to use leisure time constructively, thus reducing loneliness, isolation and boredom.

The varied factors which motivate persons to provide volunteer services make it clear that what appeals to one person might not appeal to another. For this reason messages conveyed to prospective employee volunteers should reflect potential rewards which the program can offer the volunteers, teachers and students.

Three major approaches to recruiting volunteers have been identified and all may be used with success in your company or business. These include individual, group and general approaches.

(1) Individual:	Telephone call, word of mouth, directed memos, payroll announcements;
(2) Group:	Presentations at divisional, departmental or unit meetings; existing company employee organizations;
(3) Employees-at-large:	Bulletin boards, articles in company-wide newsletters, posters, exhibits, billboard at plant entrance, volunteer program action center.

The approach used will depend on the size of an organization, type of business, and communication channels and procedures. In general, employee-at-large and group approaches will reach a larger segment of the employees than will individual approaches. However, the selection of recruitment strategies should not be guided strictly by the number of people contacted, or even the number of interested people. When the special education program has assignments that do not require unique skills or experiences, group and employee-at-large appeals may be most effective in recruiting volunteers. When specialized needs must be filled, individual or target group approaches are more effective. The recruiter should be prepared to answer questions about the special education program, as well as the volunteer program. Employees interested in serving as volunteers should complete a "Volunteer Application Form" at the time of the discussion.

Contacts with existing school volunteers among company employees should be fully explored for potential sources of new volunteers. Since these employees have already evidenced their support for education, their assistance and full cooperation can generally be counted upon. Another group on which to focus are employees nearing retirement. These individuals may be looking for fulfilling activities to become involved in after leaving their jobs. This provides a way to demonstrate concern for their quality of life during the retirement years.

Other approaches, such as those directed to groups within the company or to employees-at-large, can inform large numbers of persons of the need for special education volunteers. These can be extremely effective when used in conjunction with direct volunteer recruitment efforts, since they alert prospective volunteers to the existence of the program prior to their being contacted by the program coordinator/recruiter. There is one drawback, however. They may recruit a disproportionate number of employees who do not fit the needs of the program, thus requiring more time in screening prospective volunteers. Also, enthusiasm for the program may be diminished if large numbers of employees are turned away when they offer their volunteer assistance. In those instances, the decision should be explained courteously and honestly to the employee. The strengths of the employee should be emphasized and referral to another program or agency made.

It may be advisable to appoint a company volunteer recruitment committee to assist in recruiting. The committee could include representatives of major divisions, departments or work units in the organization. They can play a major role in the recruiting of volunteers and may seek assistance from others. These activities should be coordinated by the program director.

Recruiters should be prepared to respond to inquiries from prospective employee volunteers. A "Volunteer Application Form" should be designed and reproduced prior to initiating any recruitment campaign. Information on volunteer activities in special education will need to be organized and available so that it can quickly be accessed by recruiters.

Selecting individuals to assist the recruitment effort should focus on persons who can generate enthusiasm and interest on the part of the employees. Oftentimes employees who have participated in volunteer programs become effective recruiters. Their ability to share first-hand knowledge and describe the benefits of the program will help excite and energize other employees.

Company Name
Address
Phone Number

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

Name _____ Office Phone _____

Address _____ Residence Phone _____

_____ Zip Code _____

Special interests, skills or hobbies: _____

_____

_____

Position: _____

Relevant Training or Experiences: _____

_____

_____

Times Available: SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

Morning _____

Afternoon _____

Evening _____

Total Hours Available Weekly _____ Monthly _____

Are you interested in a continuing ☐, or in a short term ☐, or one-time assignment ☐?

What types of volunteer work are you interested in?

☐ Assist in the classroom.

☐ Work with an individual student.

☐ Technical assistance to special education teachers.

☐ Administrative assistance, work with program administrators.

☐ Guest lecturer (list topics):

_____

_____

☐ Curriculum development.

☐ Student outreach/follow-up.

☐ Career education experiences (e.g., counseling, tours, job shadowing).

☐ Employability skills (e.g., job applications, interviews).

☐ Advisory committee member.

☐ Design/develop educational materials.

☐ Promote community support.

☐ Transportation.

☐ Tutoring.

☐ Library, clinic, playground, athletics.

☐ Sponsorship of student groups.

☐ Student publications.

☐ Special projects (e.g., special olympics).

☐ Other: _____

_____

_____

In which subject areas are you most interested?

☐ Reading
☐ Writing
☐ Arithmetic
☐ Spelling
☐ Science
☐ Social Studies
☐ Foreign Language
☐ Industrial Arts
☐ Business & Office
☐ Agricultural Education
☐ Home Economics
☐ Distributive Education
☐ Trades and Industrial Education
☐ Health Occupations
☐ Career Education
☐ Art
☐ Music
☐ Health and Physical Education
☐ English
☐ Mathematics
☐ Driver Education
☐ Other: _____

_____

_____

With which age/grade levels of students would you be most interested in working?

☐ Elementary, grades K-3, ages 5-9

☐ Elementary, grades 4-6, ages 9-11

☐ Middle School or Junior High, grades 6-9, ages 11-14

☐ High School or Senior High School, grades 9-12, ages 13-21

☐ Post-secondary

Indicate which preferences, if any, you have in working with youngsters with different types of handicapping conditions.

☐ Mentally retarded

☐ Learning disabled

☐ Emotionally disturbed

☐ Speech and language

☐ Hearing impaired

☐ Visually impaired

☐ Physically handicapped or health impaired

Have you previously served as a volunteer with handicapped persons?_____

Where?_____

What kind?_____

_____

Screening of Applicants

A successful recruitment effort can result in identifying numerous interested employees. Once these individuals are identified, a screening process should be used to determine which prospects meet the required criteria. There are several reasons for having a screening process:

1. The company's reputation is greatly affected by the employee volunteers.
2. Special education students, teachers and programs must be helped, not hindered, by any employee involvement.
3. Morale of other employee volunteers declines when inappropriate or poor volunteer referrals are made.
4. It can prevent the employee from entering an uncomfortable situation.

In a direct effort where prospective volunteers are initially contacted, preliminary screening of prospects can be performed by the recruiter. Screening and selecting applicants who respond to an indirect recruitment campaign, on the other hand, is usually performed through a scheduled interview following receipt of an application form. For each prospect 10 to 15 minutes must be allotted to an interview in order to determine whether the applicant would make a good volunteer. If the recruitment identifies a large number of applicants, this can be a time-consuming process and may require more than one person to conduct the screening interviews.

Regardless of whether an employee has been referred through direct or indirect procedure, specific qualifications should be determined to screen and select applicants. The standards should reflect company policies, the goals and objectives of volunteers. Some suggested general qualifications are listed below.

1. A constructive attitude toward helping and/or working with people.
2. Reliability and a sense of responsibility.
3. Initiative and willingness to exert effort on behalf of the work undertaken.
4. Sufficient time available.
5. Physical, mental and emotional stability.
6. Interest in handicapped students and a desire to work with them.
7. Ability to work cooperatively with special education program personnel.
8. Adequate communication skills.
9. An obligation as a citizen to support and help the schools in educating all handicapped students.
10. Interest in sharing knowledge, skills and experiences with handicapped students and program staff.

Interviews should be conducted in a comfortable setting where conversations can proceed without interruption. Promotional literature or volunteer job descriptions should be identified in advance and be available. If the employee has submitted a volunteer application prior to the time of the interview, the interviewer should take time before the scheduled interview to review the application and note specific items on the application which should be explored.

There is no fixed pattern to follow when interviewing an applicant, so much depends on the applicant. Nevertheless, there are a number of points to keep in mind while conducting the interview. First and foremost, make sure the interview allows both parties to obtain information needed to make decisions regarding the applicant's suitability for a special education volunteer assignment. During the course of the interview, the following tasks should be accomplished:

1. Completing the application, if necessary, adding information gained in the interview.
2. Giving special attention to educational and occupational experience, volunteer experience, training, interests, hobbies, availability — days and hours — and preferences.
3. Stressing the importance of the volunteer's commitment.
4. Determining when the applicant can complete orientation and training and be referred for placement to the special education program.
5. Encouraging questions and clarifying information, procedures and choices.

At the conclusion of the interview, the applicant should be informed of the outcome. Every employee who applies, whether accepted or not, is a potential supporter and a source of new recruits. Where there appears to be some uncertainty on the part of either party, it may be advisable to suggest that the employee participate in the orientation and training sessions and reevaluate.

Immediately after the interview, the findings should be written down and attached to the employee's application form. A sample form for recording the interviewer's findings and impressions is the "Screening Interview Summary." This form is particularly helpful when a delay may occur between the time of the interview and the referral.

SCREENING INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Employee's Name _____ Sex: M___ F___

Company Phone: _____ Date: _____

Employment Experience:

Current Employment:

Volunteer Interests:

Previous Volunteer Experience:

Motivation for Applying:

Educational Background:

Limitations (Transportation, Health, Child Care):

Interviewer's Comments:

Application
Accepted: ☐ Withdrew Voluntarily: ☐ Other: ☐

Referral for Placement: _____

_____
Signed, Interviewer/Coordinator

Orientation and Training

Volunteers need orientation and training prior to referral to a special education program. Orientation and training provides general information on the purposes and goals of the program; institution and school system policies and rules pertaining to volunteers; roles, rights and responsibilities of the volunteers; and general skills or knowledges needed to perform volunteer assignments. Orientation and training help make volunteers feel more comfortable about their assignments and the new settings they are entering. This is particularly important when volunteers have been away from school for years or have not had much previous contact with handicapped children. Helping the new volunteer develop a positive, informed attitude toward handicapped students and special education should be a major goal of the orientation and training program. After completing the orientation and training program, the volunteers should:

- be interested and motivated to serve;
- have a good, general understanding of special education programs and students;
- have a positive attitude toward handicapped students;
- be effective in service as a volunteer;
- be a positive representative for your company; and
- derive personal satisfction from their role as a special education volunteer.

Providing specific skills training needed to perform volunteer assignments is the responsibility of the school system or institution. This in-service training helps volunteers deal with problems they may encounter in their specific assignments and to learn skills to expand their capabilities as a volunteer.

The orientation and training sessions should focus on topics of general application to all employee volunteers. Suggested topics for the sessions include:

1. Philosophy, purpose and organization of the special education program.
2. Goals and objectives of the company's employee volunteer program in special education.
3. School district and company policies regarding volunteers.
4. The roles and responsibilities of special education volunteers.
5. Characteristics of handicapped children and youth.
6. The volunteer's role in relation to the special education professional staff.
7. The professional staff member's role in relation to the volunteer.

It will be important to involve the professional special education personnel from school districts in your area. Your key contact persons will probably be the local directors of programs for the handicapped. These individuals can assist in developing the orientation and training program, provide resource materials and resource persons, and participate in providing the orientation and training. Special education program directors are the counterparts of the company volunteer program coordinators. They should demonstrate an enthusiastic commitment to the program and serve as the link between the company, school programs, special education teachers and employee volunteers.

The orientation should be warm and friendly. The volunteers will enter new roles with unfamiliar students, so try to make them feel comfortable in the orientation session. Begin the meeting with an informal, get-acquainted session. Serve coffee and encourage the participants to meet others who attend the meeting.

Orientation and training sessions can be held for groups ranging from five to 50 participants, although 20 to 30 is more common and desirable. Too few participants can result in limited discussion, while too large a group makes it difficult for individuals to ask questions.

Prepare handouts and audio-visual aids for regular use in orientation and training or consider developing a handbook. A slide-tape presentation or film showing handicapped students, special education programs, or special education volunteers in a variety of assignments can add to the session. The special education program director should be able to provide resource material. A low-cost option is to prepare a slide presentation from pictures of your employees in volunteer roles with the volunteer program coordinator providing the narration. If possible, have the employee volunteers develop this presentation.

Different company and school personnel can be involved. A welcoming statement from the chief executive officer (perhaps on videotape) or the corporate office in charge can reinforce and motivate new volunteers. One or more special education staff personnel should attend, participate in the presentations, and answer questions about special education or handicapped students. Parents, students and disabled adults could discuss the needs and potential benefits of volunteering. Employees currently involved in the volunteer program could attend the session and assist in the program.

A group approach to orienting and training is the preferred approach. A workshop, mini-course, or lecture-discussion format could be used, depending on the number of volunteers, their similarity of needs, and resources available. These can be held as full- or half-day sessions, or shorter sessions of one or two hours on different days.

The number of sessions and when they are held depends on the number of volunteers recruited and school schedule. Announcements of the orientation and training activity should be posted and distributed so interested employees will know the time, location and registration procedures.

Use a company facility (i.e., auditorium, conference room or meeting room) for the program rather than a school or other community facility. This reinforces the fact that the program is company sponsored and endorsed. This will motivate the employees to participate.

When appropriate, involve employee volunteers in planning activities to match the program to their needs. At the end of the program, ask for suggestions for future orientation and training activities.

Volunteer Roles

An important content area is a description of the roles and responsibilities of volunteers in the special education program. This will help volunteers decide to contribute. Their contributions can be made in four areas:

(1) administrative assistance,
(2) staff development,
(3) classroom activities, and
(4) special services.

Administrative assistance and staff development concern teachers and administrators. Classroom activities and special projects focus on students. A company may have employee volunteers working in each area. Although the following examples are drawn from real situations, your programs need not be limited to these.

- **Administrative Assistance**

When company volunteers help redesign the interior of a school building to house a new special program, make it accessible to physically handicapped students, or maximize energy efficiency, they provide administrative assistance. Related activities might involve efforts to increase efficiency, modernize office procedures, or improve data management systems. With their management techniques and office practices, business and industry personnel have much to offer special programs. Updated office and data management procedures mean more efficient offices and staff time that can be used for more productive tasks. When teachers have fewer forms to fill out they have more time for teaching. Employee volunteers can offer administrative assistance in the folowing areas:

- barrier-free design of new facilities;
- redesign of existing structures for accessibility;
- office design;
- updating office procedures;

- computerization of personnel and student data;
- public relations activities;
- publications and printing;
- transportation scheduling;
- equipment purchases procedures;
- staff planning activities.

- **Staff Development**

Staff development can increase the skills and knowledge of teachers, supervisors and administrators. These might include computer applications workshops, seminars to improve classroom skills, or having teachers work with a volunteer to experience the environment of the work setting. Suggested staff development activities include:

- workshops on business techniques and practices;
- seminars on curriculum issues related to employment skills training for jobs in your company;
- information on career decision-making, career change, and career development;
- seminar series on communication skills;
- workshops on management, personnel and public relations;
- personal financial planning seminar for teachers and administrators;
- personal tours of company sites and business offices to acquaint special education teachers with jobs and work requirements.

- **Classroom Activities**

Classroom activities are as varied and diverse as the many classrooms in which they take place. They may be a session or series of sessions in which volunteers work with students on a specified topic to reinforce or enrich instruction. Planning or curriculum development activities require cooperation of special education teachers or other personnel. Classroom activities may involve cooperative education or work-study arrangements where students spend part of their school day at a work site for on-the-job training.

Volunteers may have special skills, abilities or hobbies useful as a basis for classroom instruction. The activities will most likely take place during the school day, but not always. Volunteers may be uneasy, so proper orientation and assistance by school staff may be needed to overcome reluctance. Handicapped students may be a demanding audience, but a satisfying and appreciative one. Group presentations can address such topics as business dress, business behavior, the importance of communications, or how the company functions as an organization. A basic skills tutoring program, on the other hand, may be most effective with individuals or small groups.

Career and vocational education involve students with the world in which they must function as informed consumers, responsible citizens, and employed adults. Career education includes studies, activities and experiences related to career preparation and choice. Emphasis is placed on the transition from school to work smoothly and successfully. These topics are also included in most state-mandated minimum competency tests.

Vocational education is an approach to career education which prepares handicapped students in specific job skills related to an occupation such as auto mechanics, welding, practical nursing, secretarial or marketing. Cooperative Education and Experience-Based Career Education refer to school programs which have on-the-job experience and training for students related to their in-school instruction.

Business and industry personnel are integral parts of career and vocational education programs. Indeed, many companies think these programs are essential to their needs. School people also know that without the enthusiastic and active participation of the business/industry/labor/professional community, career education would be meaningless, since these programs and activities are grounded in the rationale that responsible education requires the collaboration between the formal educational system and the world of work.

Volunteers can participate in many special education classroom activities. The list below shows a range of possibilities:

- participate in programs focused on problems related to youth, such as unemployment, job readiness, motivation, self-awareness;
- serve as advisory committee members on curriculum and other committees;
- serve as resource persons in areas of personal skill or interest;
- coordinate student field trips to business and industry sites;
- assist in developing curriculum and instructional materials;
- assist in student community involvement projects;
- provide work-study, mentor, or job-shadowing opportunities;
- participate in career-related programs such as Junior Achievement, Future Business Leaders of America, Vocational Industrial Clubs of America;
- explain your job and the work of your company to the students;
- design or build special equipment, toys or tool items to meet unique needs of students;
- coordinate after-school career education activities that introduce students to a variety of career options;
- offer a seminar series through which students are given information on interviewing, filling out applications, business dress, and similar topics;

- conduct one-on-one training exercises planned by a speech therapist, physical therapist, occupational therapist or adaptive physical education specialist;
- coordinate after-school activities that develop leisure skills, hobbies, avocational interests;
- assist students in finding part-time jobs;
- assist students in making the transition from school to work or post-secondary education.

- **Special Services**

Special services include activities and projects that do not fit into the other categories. Some examples are:

- student awards for attendance or academic or athletic achievement;
- teacher recognition awards or ceremonies;
- assistance with program publications: providing editorial or production help with written copy, taking photographs, designing graphics;
- participating in athletic programs such as Special Olympics;
- working with parent groups, e.g., developing career education activities.

These four activities emphasize human, rather than financial, resources, but that should not imply that money has no place in employee volunteer and special education program cooperation. Almost all of these suggested volunteer activities carry some cost in terms of direct expenses or released time. Many activities require small outlays for materials, equipment, duplicating services and transportation. None of them, however, is predicated on cash donations. The major component is people who commit time and energy.

Referral for Placement

Referral for placement occurs after an employee volunteer completes the orientation and training program. Referral is made by the company's volunteer program coordinator to the school district's director of special education. A suggested form letter for making referrals is provided. The director of special education is responsible for determining specific placements and assignments.

Follow-up and Evaluation

Follow-up and evaluation are an ongoing part of the volunteer program. These activities deal with problems which arise and provide recognition and appreciation to volunteers. Program evaluation by the company and the school district provides data on the success and limitations of the program and indicate areas where changes need to be made.

(COMPANY LETTERHEAD)

REFERRAL FOR PLACEMENT

(DATE)

Name and Address
Director of Special Education
Local School District

Dear _____:

I am pleased to recommend to you _____(person's name)_____ to serve as a volunteer in _____(name of school district)_____'s special education program. _____(person's name)_____ has completed our orientation and training program, completed the Volunteer Application Form, and participated in a screening interview. His/her Volunteer Application Form is enclosed for your information and planning purposes. We look forward to working with your program.

Very truly yours,
(Signature)
(Name of Coordinator)
(Position/Title)

Follow-up and Monitoring of Volunteer Performance

Placement referrals for new volunteers can either mark the beginning of an extended, rewarding relationship or can be a brief, dissatisfying experience. Proper placement by the school system is the key factor. How satisfied the volunteer is with an assignment, how challenged they feel, how effectively they are used, and how long they continue, will depend on proper and sound placement.

Reasons for dissatisfaction or dropping out include: underplacement or overplacement leading to a mismatch between the volunteer's skills, time, interests and abilities and the volunteer assignment; lack of adequate supervision; curtailment of opportunities for personal growth; failure to give volunteers who have done an excellent job the opportunity to move up, perhaps to become a trainer of new volunteers.

Although placement of volunteers is the responsibility of the school district, the volunteer program coordinator can do several things to make the experience successful. Follow-up with each volunteer is important, as well as frequent and continuous contact with the special education program director. Consider sending a follow-up card to each volunteer after the first few weeks of an assignment. This can identify volunteers whose expectations are not being met by their assignments. Further contact can then be made with each volunteer who indicates that a different assignment would be preferred, or who may have second thoughts about volunteering. This lets volunteers know that the program wants them to have a satisfactory and fulfilling assignment, and that help will be provided to find a more suitable assignment or overcome other problems such as child care, transportation or scheduling.

The company's volunteer program coordinator should make frequent contacts with the special education program director to review assignments and the performances of volunteers. This process can avoid potential problems, address dissatisfactions, and identify special education program needs.

Company Name
Employee Volunteer Program in Special Education

VOLUNTEER FOLLOW-UP

To: (Name of Volunteer)
Now that you've been working as a volunteer in the special education program, please take a few minutes and let us know how your assignment is going. Please complete this card and return it to our office. Thank you.

(Signature)
_____
Volunteer Program Coordinator

☐ I am enjoying my volunteer assignment.

☐ I am dissatisfied with my assignment and would like another. The reason for my dissatisfaction: _____

_____

☐ I have decided not to continue as a volunteer at this time because

_____

_____

_____

Recognition and Appreciation

Informal and formal evidence of recognition and appreciation for volunteer participation is extremely important in retaining volunteers. Some things that can be done are the following:

- Ask the employee volunteer for advice on problems such as recruiting and training.
- Talk to volunteers to see how they are doing.
- Award special citations for extraordinary achievements.
- Conduct company-wide recognition events.
- Plan annual ceremonial occasions.
- Give certificates of appreciation to participating employees.
- Circulate memos describing volunteer achievements.

Obviously, there are many ways for the special education program and personnel to express their appreciation formally and informally. Ideally, coordinated expressions of appreciation and recognition should come from both areas.

Many activities will also promote the volunteer program by informing people in the company of what is happening. Publicity in the schools and the community will also help. The schools have their own public information networks. These can be used for photo-stories of events and presentations to PTA groups. Local news media should also be used. Copy and photos can be submitted to them and volunteers could be interviewed on radio or television public interest shows. The program coordinator or employee volunteers can make presentations to the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club and other civic groups. These activities promote the program and recognize participating employees.

Most companies will not want to be perceived as promoting themselves through the special education program in the schools. Consequently, publicize the people involved, not the company. Publicity efforts should focus on employee volunteers, students, teachers, administrators, and programs they assist.

A good promotion strategy is to create an image for the project with a name and logo. Using the name and logo to mark handouts, brochures and folders will help the volunteer program build a self-sustaining identity.

Certificate of Appreciation

NAME OF COMPANY

IN RECOGNITION
OF
VOLUNTEER SERVICE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

_____
(Name of Person)

Given this _____ day of _____, 1984.

_____ _____
Company President Volunteer Program Coordinator

Program Evaluation

Evaluation should: (1) provide information on which to base decisions, and (2) demonstrate program impact to volunteers, potential recruits, company officials, special education program personnel, school board members and community groups. Evaluation should begin when the program is planned. Both process and outcome information will need to be collected. Persons responsible for operating the program will use process and outcome data. Others who are not involved directly with the program will be primarily interested in the outcomes or benefits.

Strategies for gathering specific measurements should be developed. These measures should be valid indicators of performance and related to program objectives. This can be accomplished by reviewing each major program component and by enumerating types of evidence which would show that the activity is progressing satisfactorily. This process need not require extensive data collection, but should emphasize the recording of the short-term results of activities. For example, possible measures of successful performance might include the number and/or percentage of:

1. presentations to company divisions, departments and/or units for recruitment purposes;
2. personal contacts made with potential employee volunteers;
3. employees completing the orientation and training sessions;
4. completed volunteer application forms;
5. referrals for placement made;
6. orientation and training sessions conducted;
7. company newsletter, community newspaper, local radio and television coverage on the program;
8. total company employees participating in the volunteer program.

These measures can identify strengths and limitations in implementing the program, but additional information should assess the impact of the volunteer program on participating employees and the special education programs. Efforts used to recruit, orient and train, refer for placement and follow-up the volunteers should result in outcomes which can justify those efforts. By establishing program objectives and an evaluation plan prior to its implementation, these questions can be addressed. Certainly such an effort will require the collaboration and active involvement of the special education program.

Evaluations of employee volunteer programs from the company perspective should focus on activities engaged in as a result of the program and responses to the program on the part of employee volunteers. The special education program can focus on responses to the program on the part of

school staff and the impact of volunteers on the curriculum. Tabulations of the number of volunteers recruited, number of referrals for placement and total hours of volunteer services can be maintained. This information reflects the magnitude and scope of the program and is similar to information collected by the ongoing performance measures discussed above.

The immediate effects upon employee participants is the second area of inquiry. This is accomplished by collecting information from volunteers concerning their assessments of volunteer program activities. The information is generally collected by questionnaires or opinionnaires and reflects participant attitudes towards the program and their assignments, rather than changes which result from the program. Participant reactions convey important information regarding areas or activities in need of improvement. For example, how do the employee volunteers feel about the orientation and training they received? Do volunteers feel that their skills and interests are being appropriately utilized? By exploring these types of questions, the program can be modified to be more effective in its overall efforts.

Other factors in the evaluation process are to:

- Begin thinking about evaluation from the beginning of the program.
- Have at least one measurable objective related to each program goal.
- Be realistic in estimating time frames for meeting objectives.
- Make sure objectives are specific and capable of being measured.
- Compare objectives to make sure they do not conflict or overlap.
- Focus on the results of activities, as well as the activities themselves.
- Determine what resources are necessary for printing questionnaires and analyzing data.
- Try not to ask employee volunteers to complete more than one questionnaire and be sure you have a use for information requested from them.
- Have the evaluation plan reviewed and approved by the corporate officer in charge and chief executive officer.

The evaluation will provide information useful in future planning and can promote your program. Evaluation results can be reported at a public meeting of the special education program, school board or other school group, as well as to corporate board members and stockholders.

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RESOURCES

- National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation
  235 Hendricks Boulevard
  Buffalo, NY 14226
  (716) 834-7047

  The National Clearinghouse for Information on Industry Involvement in Education. Assists industry and education personnel develop a coherent structure and process for joint efforts in fostering school improvement and economic development. Emphasizes industry-education councils, cooperative planning, curriculum development, in-service training, instructional materials and equipment, and school management. Provides technical assistance, publications including a newsletter and journal, and conferences.

- The Council for Exceptional Children
  1920 Association Drive
  Reston, Virginia 22091-1598
  (703) 620-3660

  The international professional organization for special education. Provides publications, audio-visual materials, conferences and training sessions related to all aspects of special education.

- National School Volunteer Program
  701 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 320
  Alexandria, Virginia 22314
  (703) 836-4880

  Technical assistance services available from NSVP include publications, slide-tape presentations, research on model programs and school legislation as well as training for volunteers and volunteer coordinators. Of particular interest: *Volunteers and Children With Special Needs*, a resource manual and slide-tape presentation.

- Partnership Dataline, USA
  (800) 223-6004 New York, Alaska, Hawaii: (212) 730-7930

  An information system with data base of 6,000 samples of partnerships and other local initiatives for community problem-solving. Continues the work of the President's Task Force on Private Sector Initiatives.